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INFORMATION ON USSR AGRICULTURE, 1 - 20 MAY 1953

Comment: This report presents information, from Soviet newspapers, on agriculture in the USSR as a whole and in nine union republics for the period 1 - 20 May 1953. Progress and statistical data are given on the following: crops, mechanization, and land improvement.

Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources.⁷

USSR

The total area sown to all agricultural crops in the USSR in 1952 exceeded the prewar level by 5.3 million hectares, and the gross grain harvest reached 8 billion pud.

The tractor park in 1952 exceeded its prewar strength by 59 percent, and the number of combines was 1.5 times greater than prewar.⁽¹⁾

The volume of work scheduled for MTS in 1953 has increased greatly with regard to fodder crops in the USSR. MTS are required to harvest 3.3 times as much hay and 5.8 times as much ensilage as in 1950.

Hay mowing has been started in kolkhozes of Turkmen SSR, but the plan for repairing tractors and self-propelled mowing machines has been achieved only 40 percent.

In MTS of Kazakh SSR, only 48 percent of the mowing machines are prepared for work; in MTS of Rostovskaya Oblast, 33 percent of the tractors and self-propelled mowing machines have been repaired, while in Stalingradskaya Oblast only 28 percent of them have been repaired.

Tractor-drawn ensilage cutters have been repaired in MTS of the following oblasts by the percent indicated: Smolenskaya Oblast, 21 percent; Kalininskaya Oblast, 27 percent; Kurskaya Oblast, 18 percent; Vologodskaya Oblast, 25 percent; and, Kirovskaya Oblast, 12 percent.⁽²⁾

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Estonian SSR

Four MTS have been created in the republic recently and the volume of basic tractor operations has more than doubled the 1952 level.(3)

Latvian SSR

Sudan grass is being sown on a large scale for the first time in the republic. Field experiments carried out by sovkhozes have indicated that Sudan grass, in spite of its affinity for warmth, is able to withstand the changeable and cool weather of the Baltic republics and is capable of yielding a rather good harvest.

Sovkhozes of the republic are extending by a third the area devoted to pumpkin, squash, and other cucurbit crops.(4)

Belorussian SSR

The sowing of spring wheat is being completed, and more than 50 percent of the kolkhozes in the republic are sowing above plan. Various methods of sowing are in use; 75,000 hectares are being sown by the close-row and crisscross methods. The areas sown to high-yielding varieties is being doubled.(5)

Kolkhozes of Minskaya Oblast are planting potatoes and vegetables on a large scale. Over 120 kolkhozes are part of a vegetable-growing zone which has been created to provide workers living in Minsk with potatoes and vegetables.

Olericulture is being expanded by more than 1.5 times over 1952, and workers in Minsk will receive greater amounts of vegetables at an earlier date in 1953. The check-row method of planting is being employed by all kolkhozes; an area of 8,000 hectares is being devoted to mechanized olericulture.(6)

Ukrainian SSR

More than 230,000 workers and employees of Kievskaya Oblast have obtained plots of land for family gardening, and more than 50,000 families are cultivating such plots in Kiev alone. In Dnepropetrovskaya and Zaporozhskaya oblasts, 400,000 workers are planting vegetables and potatoes.(7)

In 1953, a considerable increase over 1952 was made in the area devoted to sugar beets in Vinnitskaya Oblast, and the 1953 harvest is expected to be 45 percent greater than in 1952.

Sugar-beet growers are striving for a yield of no less than 225 quintals per hectare.

Georgian SSR

Agricultural work is more than 80 percent mechanized in Tsiteltskaroyskiy, Signakhskiy, and a number of eastern rayons of the republic. The capacity of the 1953 tractor park has been increased 60 percent over 1950; five new MTS have been created during the period of spring work.(1)

RSFSR

By 8 May, kolkhozes of Penzenskaya Oblast had sown 100,000 more hectares of crops than by the same date in 1952.

A variety of seeds is being used and sowing is almost completely carried on with tractor-drawn seeders. The area devoted to spring wheat has been increased by 8,000 hectares. Hundreds of checkrow planters are being used in planting sunflowers on kolkhoz fields.(5)

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The sowing of spring wheat has been completed in Penzenskaya Oblast, with 10,000 hectares sown above plan. During the Fifth Five-Year Plan, the area devoted to wheat is to increase by 150,000 hectares.(7)

In 1953, more than 350 potato-planting machines will be used in planting potatoes on an area of 25,000 hectares in Vladimirskaya Oblast.(8)

Sovkhozes of Moskovskaya Oblast are required to increase by 12 percent the area devoted to olericulture and to obtain an average yield of no less than 240 quintals of vegetables per hectare. A 20-percent increase in the land devoted to olericulture and a doubled yield is demanded of kolkhozes in Leningradskaya Oblast.(3)

The sowing of spiked grain crops was completed in less time than in 1952 and 10,000 hectares of wheat were sown above plan in Ul'yanovskaya Oblast. The sowing of annual grasses is being completed.(9)

More than 30 leading grain-growing regions of Rostovskaya Oblast had completed sowing early spring crops by 1 May. (3)

Many kolkhozes and sovkhozes of the republic are lagging behind in the spring work required in olericulture. As of 1 May, the plan for planting vegetables was achieved 27 percent in Dagestanskaya ASSR, 22 percent in Rostovskaya Oblast, and 37 percent in Stavropol'skiy Kray.

Many kolkhozes and sovkhozes are even lacking full supplies of seeds and seedlings. In Astrakhanskaya Oblast, kolkhozes are 30 percent short in their supply of tomato seedlings, and 50 percent short in mustard and eggplant seeds. That is the situation in an oblast with a highly developed canning industry where those vegetables constitute the main types of foodstuffs canned.

Kolkhozes of Chelyabinskaya Oblast are only 67 percent prepared for planting vegetables. As of 30 April, the plan for sowing grain crops in Astrakhanskaya Oblast had been fulfilled, while the plan for planting vegetables was achieved only 13 percent.(6)

Kolkhozes of Bashkirskaya ASSR fulfilled the plan for applying supplemental fertilizers to winter crops 116 percent.(3)

Almost two thirds of the vegetables cultivated in kolkhozes of Leningradskaya Oblast is accomplished by MTS.

From 1953 to 1955, the number of hotbeds is to be expanded considerably in kolkhozes and sovkhozes of the oblast. Up to 800,000 frames will be constructed, and hotbeds will cover an area of 90,000 square meters.

A hotbed combine in operation in Leningrad utilizes an area of more than 25,000 square meters, on which over 13,000 quintals of cucumbers, tomatoes, green onions, and other early vegetables are grown. The combine is now being doubled.(10)

Kolkhozes of Astrakhanskaya Oblast fulfilled the plan for sowing early grain crops 112.3 percent. Mustard seed was also sown above plan; kolkhozes and sovkhozes are now engaged in planting vegetables and potatoes.(3)

Kolkhozes of Komi-Permyatskiy Natsional'nyy Okrug completed sowing wheat 6 days earlier than in 1952 on soil that was well cultivated and fertilized. The seeds used were of the high-yielding Diaman variety, grown locally.

Each year the cultivation of wheat continues to advance northward and the area sown to it in the okrug has increased 10 percent over 1952.(11)

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Kolkhozes of Kamchatskaya Oblast are extending the cultivation of potatoes and vegetables, the planting and care of which has been mechanized 80 percent. The area devoted to perennial grasses in 1953 is being tripled.

Spring crops are sprouting in the fields of Chuvashskaya ASSR; areas sown to winter crops are also making progress. In spite of adverse weather conditions, tractor work exceeded the 1952 volume of work for the same period of time by 70,000 hectares.(12)

MTS of Ryazanskaya Oblast are committed to plant 38,000 hectares of potatoes in 1953; their possession of 540 two-row and three-row potato planters provides them with the means of exceeding the plan. In 1953, kolkhozes of the oblast will plant 15,000 hectares of potatoes by the checkrow method.

The number of machines used for checkrow planting of potatoes, which the oblast is now receiving, includes 20 machines above plan. The job of specialists is to assist MTS in mastering the use of these machines and in utilizing them productively.(11)

Seven MTS of Stavropol'skiy Kray have completed combine repairs ahead of schedule. In 1953, 3,000 mechanized threshing floors will be constructed; this is three times the number erected in 1952.(6)

About 20,000 kolkhoz workers are daily occupied with meadow and pasture improvement in Ryazanskaya Oblast. By 4 May, such work had been completed on an area of 120,000 hectares.(13)

Kazakh SSR

Potatoes are being planted in extensive areas adjacent to Alma-Ata and other industrial centers of the republic.

Over 100 kolkhozes and sovkhoses are developing the hotbed cultivation of vegetables; in 1953, 5,000 additional hectares will be devoted to cucumbers, tomatoes, and beets.(14)

In 1953, kolkhozes and sovkhoses of the republic are doubling the area devoted to potatoes and tripling that devoted to vegetables, as compared with 1952.(13)

Uzbek SSR

Hay mowing has been started on the steppes of Kashka-Dar'inskaya, Samarkand-skaya, and Bukharskaya oblasts. Spring rains have stimulated the rapid growth of grasses.

MTS and mechanized animal husbandry stations are providing 1,700 tractor-drawn and self-propelled hay-mowing machines for use on the steppes. Mechanization of the hay harvest will be twice as extensive as in 1952.(15)

Cotton growers of the republic have committed themselves to harvest at least 3.5 quintals per hectare more than they did in 1952.

This objective is attainable, since in 1952, in spite of unfavorable spring and fall weather conditions, many kolkhozes obtained a cotton yield of 30-40 and more quintals per hectare, an amount considerably higher than yield assignments established for the end of the Five-Year Plan.

In Uzbek SSR, there are 14 tractors per 1,000 hectares of sown area, or about one tractor per 70 hectares.(5)

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The first-quarter 1953 plan for cleaning the irrigation system was fulfilled 134 percent, representing 26 million cubic meters of earth-removing work.

The proper upkeep of the irrigation system will provide for the optimum use of irrigation in Ferganskaya, Bukharskaya, and Khorezmskaya oblasts and in Kara-Kalapakskaya ASSR. In these regions irrigation plays an important role.

By 1 April, an area of 260,000 hectares had been irrigated, as against 182,000 hectares in 1952 and 72,000 hectares in 1951.(6)

Tadzhik SSR

Kolkhozes of the Kafirnigan and the Vakhsh river valleys have started to work on the first alfalfa harvest; the area devoted to alfalfa has increased by almost 1.5 times.(6)

SOURCES

1. Sel'skoye Khozyaystvo, 1 May 53
2. Ibid., 17 May 53
3. Ibid., 5 May 53
4. Ibid., 16 May 53
5. Ibid., 9 May 53
6. Ibid., 6 May 53
7. Pravda, 20 May 53
8. Sel'skoye Khozyaystvo, 8 May 53
9. Pravda, 17 May 53
10. Ibid., 4 May 53
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13. Ibid., 5 May 53
14. Izvestiya, 13 May 53
15. Ibid., 15 May 53

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